

FLIGHT JACKET

Vol. 8, No. 8

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

February 24, 2006

HMM-163 returns home from deployment

Story by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Excitement was in the air at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar when a large formation consisting of several CH-46E Sea Knights and CH-53E Super Stallions approached MCAS Miramar from the horizon. The aircraft landed on the air station and taxied their way to a position near the spectators who were waiting for their return.

After the Marines and sailors dismounted their aircraft, they were dismissed to their families and friends after a seven-month deployment aboard the USS Tarawa, supporting operations and exercises around the globe.

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, returned home Feb. 19, after a deployment with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable). The squadron provided assault support for 13th MEU (SOC) for several operations that included a three-month tour in Iraq.

The MEU also provided humanitarian assistance to the Philippine Islands, such as medical and dental services and relief supplies in August 2005. The squadron supplied the MEU with the transportation that was needed to make the two-day relief operation possible.

During the deployment the squadron participated in Exercise Bright Star. Bright Star is a training exercise in Egypt that is designed to improve military cooperation and relations between America and its allies. The exercise involves a combination of air, ground, naval and special operations forces.



Hundreds of Marines from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, were welcomed home by their families and friends Feb. 19, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, after a seven-month deployment aboard the USS Tarawa. The squadron acted as the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) aviation combat element. The 13th MEU (SOC) participated in several operations and exercises around the globe including a three-month tour in Iraq. Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

Chairman cites continued progress for democracy

Story by Steven Donald Smith

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Noting “incredible” strides for democracy in Afghanistan and pointing out continued progress in Iraq, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told a National Press Club audience in Washington, Feb. 17, that U.S. efforts in those countries are bearing fruit.

“The progress in Afghanistan has been incredible,” Marine Gen. Peter Pace said. “They now have not only a freely elected president, but a parliament as well. They are going about the business of building their own country in a way that makes you proud.”

The chairman said he travels to Afghanistan about every six months, and every time he goes back he sees “the enormous changes that the Afghan people and the Afghan government are

providing for themselves.”

Pace noted that with the aid of 26 coalition countries, Afghan children are now regularly attending school, business prospects are growing and citizens are participating in the democratic process.

In Iraq, the general said, a lot of work remains to be done, but great strides have been made over the past year.

“A year ago, there were just a handful of Iraqi army battalions that were in the fight,” he said. “Today there are over 130, a battalion being 500 to 600 guys.”

And the Iraqi armed forces are taking over more responsibility and more territory, he added. “So as the combined armed forces of the coalition and more and more of the Iraqi security forces provide stability in the country, the Iraqi government can step forward and take hold of their future,” he said.

Pace also pointed to the January 2006 and December 2005

elections, the October referendum, the writing of the new Iraqi constitution, and establishment of a new government, as further evidence of progress in Iraq.

Looking ahead beyond Afghanistan and Iraq, the chairman spoke about the importance of the recently issued Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Military Strategy. He said a lot of war gaming was done to determine the best way to deal with current and future terror threats, and future natural disasters.

“I know that I personally, as vice chairman, and then as chairman, spent literally thousands of hours sitting with my civilian and military counterparts discussing where we were, what the challenges are for the future and how we’re going to meet those challenges,” he said. “I was proud to be able to report to the Congress that both in the case of the Quadrennial Defense Re-

See DEMOCRACY, page 2

Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



74°/57°
Today



74°/58°
Saturday



74°/57°
Sunday

Squadron
sinks talons
into Iraq skies
Page 6



Miramar 5k
run helps
promote good
health
Page 9



Back pain: avoidable, treatable injury

Story by Navy Lt. Matthew D. Tadlock

Branch Medical Clinic Miramar

Acute low back pain is a common problem for many Marines and sailors. In fact, it is the fifth reason for visits to the doctor nationwide. Approximately 90 percent of adults will suffer from low back pain at some point in their lives, but the majority of these people will have a benign course. The most common cause of low back pain is from a muscle sprain or strain.

The lower back's anatomy is a complex interaction between the lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones, nerves, muscles, ligaments and other structures. Injury to any of these structures can result in significant pain and sometimes the exact cause of the pain is hard to find.

The back has many muscles, big and small, with various functions. The ligaments in your back serve the function of attaching bone to muscle. The vertebrae are a column of small bones that house the spinal cord and support the entire upper body. In between each vertebrae are small cartilage cushions called intervertebral discs. These discs are 80 percent water and have a jelly-like substance in the center called the nucleus pulposus. These discs act like a cushion for the vertebral column.

Sometimes when a person is lifting an object while twisting at the same time a disc can bulge out beyond its associated vertebral border. This condition is known as a herniated disc. This condition is incorrectly referred to as a slipped disc. What actually occurs is the disc ruptures or flattens and thins out causing the nucleus pulposus to bulge out. Sometimes this bulge can put pressure on a nerve root causing significant pain. Sciatica occurs when a herniated disc puts pressure on the root for the sciatic nerve.

A number of things can cause low back pain. Most causes are secondary to musculoskeletal injuries such as a back muscle strain or spasm, ligament sprain, herniated vertebral disc or joint problems. Sometimes the spinal canal can become narrowed resulting in a condi-

tion called spinal stenosis.

Less common but more serious causes of low back pain include infection, malignancy, and severe trauma to the back. Only a doctor or health care provider can differentiate serious causes that require emergency treatment from the less serious causes.

Back pain can vary depending on the cause. A muscle strain in the lower back typically results in muscle aches and spasms that affect the low back, buttocks and sometimes event the posterior aspect of the thigh. Usually the pain from a muscle spasm is concentrated on the left or right side of the back. These symptoms can be quite severe and limit motion and function. An acute herniated disc typically results in a sharp shooting or burning pain that radiates down the leg. Sometimes this pain improves with standing up and worsens with sitting.

Symptoms that require an evaluation by a medical provider include back pain associated with unexplained fever or weight loss, new or worsening numbness or weakness in the legs, foot drop, numbness and tingling in the anal and genital areas and inner thighs, difficulty with bowel or bladder function and incontinence. Remember if there are any questions or concerns about a condition, seek medical care.

For common low back muscle strains and sprains anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen coupled with rehabilitation exercises and stretches are the best treatment. Bed rest is absolutely the wrong thing to do. This can actually cause the muscles to get tighter and cause you more pain than necessary. While the overall activity should be decreased, keep moving, walking and stretching as much as possible. The more mobile, in conjunction with proper stretching and regular anti-inflammatory medications, the sooner the pain will improve.

There are a number of Internet resources that have good information about the care and treatment of low back pain. Tips on pain relief and prevention can be found at: <http://familydoctor.org/117.xml>. The American Spine Society is another source of information. Also, the following Web site has diagrams and instructions on various back exercises: www.spine.org/articles/exercises.cfm.

DEMOCRACY, continued from page 1

view and in the case of the National Military Strategy, your military is fully ready to succeed."

Pace was asked to define the term "the long war," which is widely used to refer to the war on terrorism.

"The long war refers to the fact that in all the terrorist campaigns that we have known about, the terrorist campaign has lasted 10, 20, 30 years, and therefore, there is no reason to believe that these terrorists would have a time span in their minds of anything less," the chairman said.

He emphasized that this does not mean the United States will be engaged in the exact same types of operations in 20 years, but "free peoples, free governments, are going to need to continue to be alert and proactive against terrorist cells," he said.

Pace used the analogy of a city police department that cannot eliminate crime, but keeps the crime rate down

to a level that allows society to function.

"The community of nations will be able to keep the number of terrorist incidents down below the level at which all of our freedom-loving societies can function and provide the kinds of services that we want for our people," the general said.

Pace was asked about the recent U.N. report that calls for the closure of U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He criticized the report because its authors never visited the base.

"When you write that kind of report and have that kind of impact and haven't been to the place you're reporting about, there's something wrong with that," he said.

Pace stressed that the report is inaccurate in its depiction of the Guantanamo facility and the treatment of detainees being held there.

"Guantanamo is a facility that is run in a humane way," he said. "It has been the policy of the United States — it is now and will continue to be — that we will treat detainees humanely."



Is this your Saturn?

The above vehicle has been marked for impound by the Provost Marshal's Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lots.

Abandoned vehicles at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar present security risks as well as environmental and safety concerns. PMO attempts to identify and contact vehicle owners of illegally parked, abandoned vehicles prior to tagging the vehicle with a Department of Defense notice. Vehicles are then scheduled for towing three days following the notice.

For more information, please call 577-1276 or 577-4139.

MIRAMARKS

"What can you do to avoid injuries during times of physical activity?"

CPL. BRANDON RICHARDSON
Aviation Communication Technician
MAL5-16

"Stretching is a good way to minimize injury, because it prevents you from pulling a muscle during physical activity."



SGT. RANDALL VARGAS
Aviation Electrician
VMFAT-101

"You can use operational risk management as well as remain vigilant to your surroundings to prevent injury."

FLIGHT JACKET

The *Flight Jacket* is published every Friday at no cost to the government by Military Guides, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps under an exclusively written contract with the U.S. Marine Corps.

This civilian enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for the military services, contents of the *Flight Jacket* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, Department of the Navy or U.S. Marine Corps.

It is for informational purposes only and in no way should be considered directive in nature.

The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or ques-

tions should be directed to ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by DoD or the Military Guides, of the products or service advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication must be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. All queries concerning business matters, display ads or paid classified ads should be directed to Military Guides, 9636 Tierra Grande, Suite 201, San Diego, CA 92126, or (858) 547-7343.



MAJ. GEN. SAMUEL T. HELLAND
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



COL. PAUL C. CHRISTIAN
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

Maj. Curtis Hill
Public Affairs Director

Capt. Al Eskalis
Public Affairs Deputy Director

Gunnery Sgt. Matthew L. Sewell
Public Affairs Chief

Sgt. John L. Zimmer III
Internal Information Officer

Cpl. Paul Leicht
Layout

Logistics Marines keep aviation gear in supply

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – Marines with the Individual Material Readiness List section ensure nearly a dozen Marine helicopter and fixed wing squadrons have the gear they need in Iraq when they need it.

The IMRL section is part of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward).

“As part of MALS-16, we support all the flying squadrons by conducting inventory control on more than 3,000 items that are located at Forward Operating Bases throughout Iraq,” said Gunnery Sgt. Donald J. Monahan, IMRL chief. “We don’t fix or maintain the equipment, but act as a liaison between the squadrons and the maintainers or suppliers of equipment.”

Keeping track of the thousands of pieces of equipment in a combat zone, many of which are aircraft specific and cost millions of dollars, is difficult, but a decision made prior to 3rd MAW’s relief of the 2nd MAW was key to their success, according to Monahan.

“We brought together Marines from MAGs throughout the United States to come here and conduct a complete inventory of all the equipment in Iraq, from early January to February,” said Monahan, a Great Falls, Mont., native. “It was an advantage having experienced people come here for the inventory transition, because there are so many types, models and series of aircraft out here. I am familiar with rotary wing aircraft equipment, but not fixed wing aircraft equipment, so I was able to draw on the knowledge of Marines who are.”

The team of Marines arrived in Iraq motivated and hit the ground running. They worked long, hard hours to get the inventory of equipment done, according to Staff Sgt. Leticia Vega, IMRL chief and San Joaquin, Calif., native.

Having set up their shop and finishing the complete inventory of their assets, the IMRL Marines’ primary focus is keeping the squadrons’ allowance of equipment fully stocked.

“You need to have patience and attention to detail to do this job,” said Lance Cpl. Jordan R. Thomas, an IMRL manager and Rapid City, S.D., native. “There are certain pieces of gear that always have problems, so you have to keep aware of the situation, be proactive and ready to take care of it, because the supply chain can take a while.”

Along with managing their inventory of gear within the Marine Corps, the IMRL Marines are responsible for the movement of items from Iraq to the United States and vice versa.

“If the gear can’t be fixed here, then it’s sent back home,” said Sgt. Tyrell I. Coel, IMRL manager and New York City native. “We’re acting as a kind of watchdog for all the gear as it moves from the United States to the FOBs.”



Amidst a sea of aircraft jacks, Lance Cpl. Steven G. Klinger (right) reads off serial numbers to Cpl. Stephen G. Vega during an inventory of the equipment, Feb. 13, at Al Asad, Iraq. The Marines are with the Individual Material Readiness List section which is responsible for tracking inventory for more than 3,000 pieces of aviation equipment located on Forward Operating Bases throughout Iraq. The section is part of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), and supports Marine aviation squadrons operating in the country. Klinger is an IMRL manager and Berwick, Penn., native. Vega is also an IMRL manager and Orlando, Fla., native. *Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich*

‘Bulldogs’ surpass 60k milestone

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – With ground crew running around, their flashlights bobbing and weaving like fireflies on a hot summer’s night, the pilot in jet number nine shut its engine down completing a record-setting combat mission.

Nearly 16 years has passed since Marine Attack Squadron 223, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), recorded a “Class A” mishap. During a combat mission over Iraq Feb. 10, the AV-8B Harrier surpassed the 60,000 “Class A” mishap-free hours mark.

The milestone builds upon what has been an already successful period of time for VMA-223. As the top Marine aviation squadron, the Bulldogs were presented the 2005 Pete Ross Safety Award for exceptional achievements in safety on Oct. 15, 2005, the first time ever for a Harrier squadron, leading Marine aviation by incorporating Operational Risk Management practices into every facet of squadron life.

“Our priority is neither mission first, nor safety first, but safe missions, always,” said Lt. Col. Andrew G. Shorter, commanding officer, VMA-223. “Some of it’s good piloting, but I can’t overemphasize the importance of the maintenance side of the squadron.”

Arriving here in August 2005, the squadron continued the safe flying trend established and carried out through years of flying from their home, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., and numerous exercises worldwide.

As a result of an increased operational tempo in support of ground operations, the Bulldogs’ aircraft are flown at three times their normal monthly rate.

According to Shorter, a policy of empowered leadership throughout the ranks, attention to detail and the application of ORM have continued the strong Bulldog safety record.

The wrench turning junior Marines and noncommissioned officers of the maintenance department have kept the Harriers flying right, despite the increased hours and strain on the aircraft.

“Yes, we work a lot. Twelve hours on and 12 hours off, but everything repaired undergoes a double-check by another Marine to make sure it’s good,” said Lance Cpl. Jeromy L. Artz, an airframe mechanic and Morrisville, Mo., native. “With as many hours that we’re flying, the wings and engines need continuous maintenance done correctly the first time.”

The message of doing the maintenance job right continually echoed throughout the maintenance department’s Marines.

“It takes the entire maintenance department doing the job right the first time to make this happen. Sometimes, it is difficult getting parts at Al Asad, so we have to go out and find them somewhere,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Craig L. Beasley, maintenance control officer. “It is the mindset of the Marines that make it work. They don’t want to see their work fail, especially with the missions we fly supporting the Marines on the ground.”

Together the Marines of VMA-223, having flown 60,000 mishap-free hours, continue to follow through on their commanding officer’s safety policy, which states, “Our mission is to sup-



Marines with Marine Attack Squadron 223, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), change the engine on an AV-8B Harrier at Al Asad, Iraq. Beneath a clear moonlit sky, the Bulldogs made history Feb. 10, setting a new record of 60,000 “Class A” mishap-free hours flown by a Harrier squadron. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Craig L. Beasley



An AV-8B Harrier belonging to Marine Attack Squadron 223, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), shuts down after completing another combat mission Feb. 10, at Al Asad, Iraq, putting the squadron past 60,000 “Class A” mishap-free flight hours. The squadron has been forward deployed to Iraq since August 2005. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

port the Marine Air Ground Task Force commander by destroying or defeating surface targets or escorting friendly aircraft day or night, under all weather conditions during expeditionary, joint or combined operations by providing - ready people, ready planes, ready pilots.”

“This is a high-water mark for the Harrier. We’ve come a long way, the first Harrier squadron to win the Ross award and now 60,000 hours mishap free,” said Shorter, a Melbourne, Fla., native. “It’s not just us though, the whole Harrier community has succeeded.”

MARFORPAC assists with humanitarian relief

Story by Lance Cpl. Ethan Hoaldrige

Marine Forces Pacific

CAMP H. M. SMITH, Hawaii – U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, held a press conference Feb. 19 to outline disaster relief efforts being conducted in the Philippines in the wake of the landside that occurred Feb. 17.

“In the last 24 hours, our units have been diligently supporting the Philippine government at the disaster site in the town of Saint Bernard on the isle of Leyte,” said Lt. Col Michael R. Ramos, the MARFORPAC director of current operations.

“Hundreds of Marines and sailors from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade have been literally digging with their hands and small tools through the mud for survivors and victims of this disaster,” he continued.

Some parts of the town are buried anywhere from 30 to 100 feet below the mud.

An estimated 1,800 people remain unaccounted for.

MARFORPAC immediately responded by sending flights of supplies.

“We’ve delivered one plane of supplies and several others are enroute carrying blankets, potable water, food and various other relief supplies,” said Ramos.

The U.S. and Philippine coalition forces

have been working hand-in-hand searching for survivors and distributing supplies.

There is other help on the way to provide medical support as well.

Two U.S. naval ships, the USS Harpers Ferry and the USS Essex, with approximately 4,000 service members, and 22 helicopters, are off shore of Leyte in support of the disaster relief efforts.

Marine forces were already in the Philippines for Exercise Balikatan 06, an annual bilateral training exercise, which this year focuses on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

“Both our long-standing relationship with the Philippine government and its military, and the forward deployed capabilities of our units have enabled us to respond very quickly and efficiently to this tragedy,” said Ramos.



Lt. Col. Michael R. Ramos, director of current operations, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, conducts a press conference Feb. 19 to outline disaster relief efforts being conducted in the Philippines in the wake of the landside that occurred Feb. 17. The U.S. and Philippine coalition forces have been working hand-in-hand searching for survivors and distributing supplies. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Ethan Hoaldrige*

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!



MCAS Miramar needs servicemembers from all ranks, occupations, experiences, backgrounds and upbringings to participate in the Guest Speaker Program. If you are interested, call the Community Relations Department at (858) 577-4333.

An appreciative audience awaits

Get Noticed by Motorists...



NOT BY PMO

MARINE CORPS ORDER 5100.19E STATES:
“During periods of reduced visibility, and before morning colors and after evening colors, personnel shall wear retro-reflective clothing, vest or belt when conducting physical training or exercising on or near roadways.”

It's not just a good idea
IT'S THE LAW

F/A-18 Hornet squadron joins MAG-16 at Al Asad

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – Two F/A-18 Hornet squadrons exchanged roles at Al Asad Feb. 9, with responsibility for helping to protect the skies of Iraq left in the capable hands of the “Hawks” of Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward).

VMFA(AW)-533 will provide close air support to friendly forces in Iraq as the “Moonlighters” of VMFA(AW)-332, MAG-31, 2nd MAW, provided during their seven-month rotation in the combat zone.

“It’s a real privilege to serve our nation, especially when we get to help people achieve their freedom and establish their own brand of democracy. To be here in its infancy, and to assist in its first steps is a true honor,” said Lt. Col. Christopher J. Mullin, commanding officer, VMFA(AW)-533. “Additionally, it’s what we all aspire to as Marines, to face our nation’s foes in the field and prevent them from ever again threatening our homes and fellow countrymen. It’s what we signed up for.”

Taking over responsibility from the Moonlighters carries with it a constant life and death mission for the Hawks.

“We will be providing timely and accurate close air support and airborne

continued on the next page



Lance Cpl. Chris L. Switzer directs a taxiing F/A-18D Hornet with Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), Feb. 9 at Al Asad Air Base. The Hawks assumed responsibility for providing close air support to friendly forces in Iraq from VMFA(AW)-332, MAG-31, 2nd MAW, less than 24 hours after their arrival. Switzer is a power plant mechanic with VMFA(AW)-533 and a Gig Harbor, Wash., native. *Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich*

continued from page 6

command and control, day and night, in all weather to the Marines of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force as they engage the forces arrayed against us,” said Mullin, a Franklin, Mass., native. “This is what Marine aviation is all about ... delivering ordnance in close proximity to friendly forces in order to help them accomplish their mission and achieve the objective of supporting the Iraqi people as they defend their fledgling democracy.”

The transfer of authority from the Moonlighters to the Hawks is just one of several scheduled rotations of Marine aviation squadrons in Iraq.

“We’ve been prepping for this since we came off the unit deployment plan a year ago, so the Marines were anxious to leave and start working,” said Sgt. Maj. Scott C. Mykoo, squadron sergeant major, VMFA(AW)-533. “The Hawks are ready. They’ve been waiting for this moment and are ready to attack.”

A rotation between two squadrons usually takes a day or two, but the Hawks were launching their aircraft just a few hours after their arrival, according to Mykoo.

“We had a good advance party come before the aircraft arrived to prepare,” said the Jacksonville, Fla., native. “The Moonlighters have laid solid groundwork for us, but there is always room for improvement.”

“Our goal is to make it even better. That’s what the Marine Corps is all about, we change duty stations and deploy constantly bringing new ideas to the job,” explained Mykoo. “Then the guys replacing us will say, ‘The Hawks set us up, but now we got it,’ and we can go home.”

After providing a solid turnover to the Hawks, the Moonlighters are heading back to their families in the United States.

“(The deployment) went pretty quick. You go to sleep on a Monday and seem to wake up on a Friday, but I have missed my wife and kids,” said Staff Sgt. Derrick L. White Sr., administrative chief, VMFA(AW)-332 and Charleston, S.C., native. “The transition went pretty smooth, because the squadron replacing us was ready to take over.”



Lt. Col. Christopher J. Mullin (left) and David A. Wilbur walk across the tarmac of Al Asad after Mullin's arrival Feb. 9. Mullin is the commanding officer of Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). Wilbur is the commanding officer of VMFA(AW)-332, MAG-31, 2MAW. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Ejection seat training helps save lives

Story by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

There are many components, such as the Navy Aircrew Common Ejection Seat, in the F/A-18 Hornet that are designed to help the pilot survive in the case of an emergency.

It is designed to extract aircrew from an aircraft before a crash or during an emergency.

The seat is propelled at a high speed out of the aircraft by a rocket motor. The ejection seat will save lives, but it can also cause a pilot to sustain career-ending injuries if they fail to use proper body positioning techniques during ejection.

The Aviation Survival Training Center, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, has an ejection seat simulator that aircrew use to practice and perfect their body position.

“The purpose of this training is to teach aircrew the proper fundamentals for body position during ejection,” said Navy Lt. Jon D. Champine, aerospace physiologist, ASTC, MCAS Miramar. “It ensures they have the best possible outcome in the safest manner possible during a worse case scenario.”

Fixed wing pilots are required to conduct training on the proper body positioning during ejection to ensure minimal injury.

“Whoever flies in an ejection seat aircraft needs this training at least once in their career,” said Champine, a 32-year-old native of Truman, Minn. “This training can save lives and definitely reduce the risk of bodily injury.”

Champine said if someone ejects from an aircraft with the wrong body position they might suffer from injuries such as fractured bones and dislocated limbs.

“In an actual aircraft the chance of injury is greatly enhanced with the wrong body position,” said Champine.

The proper body position consists of the feet flat on the ground while leaning back into the seat. This aligns the spine with the direction of the force from the ejection. Arm position is also vital as when ejection occurs there will be



Navy Lt. j.g. Martha A. Wittosch, project specialist, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 115, Carrier Air Wing 5, conducts familiarization training with the ejection seat at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. A pilot may sustain injury during ejection if the proper body positioning is not used. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver*

force on the pilot. If arm position is incorrect the pilot may suffer from dislocated shoulders.

The compressed air-powered ejection seat simulator does not simulate the actual force that occurs during ejection, but aircrew will know if their body position is incorrect.

“Even with the low amount of force, it will let people

know if their body position was proper,” said Champine.

An ejection seat is not designed for comfort. It is designed to save someone’s life. Some pilots have suffered career-ending injuries from failure to use proper body positioning. This training can save lives and prevent major injuries.

Miramar fun run helps promote good health

Story by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

February is Healthy Heart Month and Miramar's Marine Corps Community Services has organized several events that promote health and fitness for service members and their families.

Hundreds of Marines, sailors and spouses participated in the Healthy Heart Las Vegas Fun Run Feb. 14, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. The event was held as part of the month long programs for healthy heart month.

The participants had the choice of either running or walking the three-mile course.

"The Marines tend to race each other, but this is not a race, it is a fun run," said Janine Bauckman, fitness director, MCCS.

The event had a goal to educate people on health issues such as dieting, abstinence and stress.

"This event is to make people more aware of health issues," said Julie Carlson, health promotion coordinator, MCCS. "Education awareness is important. If we can teach one Marine healthy habits then it is worth it."

The event was held to promote health, but it also included an interesting twist.

"This is something different," said Bauckman, a native of Wilmington,

N.C. "The runners received cards from different stations, and the best three hands win prizes."

Participants received a random card from each of the stations that were spread throughout the course. When the participants finished the run, they turned in their hand to compete for prizes. The person with the best poker hand won a date package that included a free hotel room, a dinner for two and movie tickets.

The poker incentive attracted participants from all fitness levels, as prizes were not given based on level of fitness. This attracted many people and gave them an opportunity to learn about the importance of health.

"I came here for fitness, but I think the poker thing is a good idea because it makes the run a little more fun," said Lance Cpl. Patrick W. Kinsella, weather observer, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, MCAS Miramar. "I think it will bring more people."

Carlson said the purpose for Healthy Heart Month is to educate people on the importance of choosing healthy habits. A person is happier when they are healthy, and they are less likely to become sick or injured.

"Some people don't realize the health choices they make now will affect them later in life," concluded Carlson. "You are happier when you are healthy."



Dennis M. Shipley, personal trainer, Semper Fit, Marine Corps Community Services, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, hands out cards to participants Feb. 14, during MCCS Miramar's Healthy Heart Las Vegas Fun Run. Each participant received cards from different stations that were placed throughout the three mile run. The runners turned in their cards after the run to compete for prizes. The runners with the best poker hands won various prizes. The event attracted hundreds of service members and families. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver*

Battle Color Detachment trains at MCAS Yuma

Story by Cpl. Giovanni Lobello

MCAS Yuma

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – The Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment arrived at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 6 for training that will last until March 3.

The Battle Color Detachment is comprised of “The Commandant’s Own” Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, Silent Drill Platoon and the Marine Corps Color Guard from Marine Barracks 8th and I, Washington, D.C.

The time spent in Yuma marks the initial training for new members of the Battle Color Detachment.

The Silent Drill Platoon spends its time here molding new members, as well as reacquainting last year’s members with their rifles. The Marine Drum and Bugle Corps uses this time to learn the new music for the upcoming show season, while both the Drum and Bugle Corps and Silent Drill Platoon focus on perfecting their new drill movements.

The Silent Drill Platoon, known for performing without verbal commands and using operational 10.5 pound M-1 Garand rifles, with fixed bayonets, spends approximately 13 hours a day, seven days a week practicing, including physical training.

“We are here to get to the point where we can do a show in front of thousands of people,” said Cpl. Tim Maurer, drill master, Silent Drill Platoon. “While we are here in Yuma, the Marines don’t get much liberty because our purpose here is to train. Once we start the show season, the Marines will have plenty of opportunities to enjoy their surroundings.”

A student with Silent Drill School - Marines hoping to be a part of this year’s Silent Drill Platoon - endorsed the platoon’s vigorous training schedule.

“The training right now is very hard, but at the end, it’ll all be worth it,” said Lance Cpl. Daniel Anderson, student,



Members of the Silent Drill Platoon rehearse their drill routine as a platoon Feb. 8. The Battle Color Detachment is comprised of “The Commandant’s Own” Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, Silent Drill Platoon and the Marine Corps Color Guard from Marine Barracks 8th and I, Washington, D.C. Photo by Cpl. Giovanni Lobello

Silent Drill School. “This is a very prestigious team, and I feel lucky to have been presented with this opportunity.”

In order for new members to make the team, they have to perform well on what is known as Challenge Day. If the new members perform better than their peers, they will earn a spot on the 24-man Silent Drill Platoon.

“The day is a surprise so the new members never know when that day will come and are always ready,” said Maurer.

The Marines who perform the best on Challenge Day are chosen to be on the

Silent Drill Platoon for the next year, added Maurer.

While the Silent Drill Platoon practices making their technique flawless, the Drum and Bugle Corps also learns its new drill routine and music.

“We are here to get it all together,” said Sgt. Clint Owens, soprano bugler, Marine Drum and Bugle Corps. “First, we learn the new drill movements. Then, we learn the music for the show, which is followed by putting the music and marching together.”

The Marine Drum and Bugle Corps will

be leaving the station March 3, when it begin its West Coast tour.

The Marine Drum and Bugle Corps’ first performance of the year will be Feb. 25 at MCAS Yuma’s 44th Annual Yuma Air Show.

“We are very excited to be opening for the air show,” said Owens. “Normally, we close a show and we are the last thing the crowd sees. So now, we will be setting the tone for the rest of the show for a change.”

The Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment will also perform their Battle Color Ceremony at MCAS Miramar Mar. 6.

Marines, sailors return home

More than 200 Marines and sailors returned to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Feb. 17 from a seven-month deployment supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Third Marine Aircraft Wing -Marines from Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, Marine Air Control Group 38 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 372, Marine Wing Support Group 37, were given a warm welcome by family, friends and fellow Marines at MCAS Miramar’s passenger terminal after their departure from Iraq took them nearly around the globe.

Several of the Marines, including Cpl. Cedric Parham, computer and telephone technician, MWCS-38, were able to greet new additions to their families. Parham met his brand new daughter, who was born while he was on his third deployment to Iraq. “He keeps telling me how excited he is to come back and just play with her on the living room floor as soon as we get home,” said Parham’s wife Melanie. “This is his third tour in four years, and I’m just glad he’s back to spend time with me and the children - who are just excited to see daddy,”

Cpl. Parham said he was equally thrilled when he embraced his wife and four children for the first time in seven months. *Photo by Cpl. Skye Jones*



Briefs

Miramar Movies

The Bob Hope Theater is located in Building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, call 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Friday:

6:30 p.m. The Ringer (PG-13)
9:00 p.m. The Producers (PG-13)

Saturday:

6:30 p.m. Hoodwinked (PG)
9:00 p.m. Rumor Has It (PG-13)

Sunday:

1:00 p.m. *Fun With Dick And Jane (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. *Memoirs of a Geisha (PG-13)

Wednesday:

6:30 p.m. Casanova (R)

Thursday:

2:00 p.m. Glory Road (PG)
6:30 p.m. Good Night & Good Luck (PG, *free showing*)

* Indicates the last showing for that film

Military Tax Center

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Tax Center is now open, providing service members and their families with free tax services.

The center is located at Building 6250 and is open Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Hours of operation will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. when the tax season nears its end April 15.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office is located in Building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Wednesday:

7 p.m. Baptist service

Monday-Friday:

11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass

Jewish:

7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

Mom or Dad Deployed?

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Youth and Teen Center is hosting a gathering for children of deployed Marines and sailors every second and fourth Monday of each month, starting this Monday. Ages 8 to 10 meet from 3:30 to 4:15, ages 11 to 13 meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. For more information call 577-1322.

Charity Golf Tournament

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Officer's Wives Club is hosting the 3rd annual OWC Charity Golf Tournament March 24, which will benefit military families through the OWC Scholarship Fund. Registration deadline is March 17, and event registration forms are available at the Miramar Golf Course.

Power Yoga Classes

Challenge your balance, strength and endurance with Power Yoga classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m., at the Miramar Sports Complex and Fridays at 11:30 at the Semper Fit Center. For more information call 577-4669.

OWC 2006 Continuing Education Scholarship

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar's Officer's Wives Club is accepting applications for the Continuing Education Scholarships from the families of MCAS Miramar's active duty, retired, or deceased military. Applications must be recieved no later than April 1. Applications are available online at www.mccsmiramar.com.

Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal's Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:	Vehicle:	License:
2005 Chevy Avalanche	NM/3DYX020	Unk. Chevy Cavalier	CA/4TMCZ86
Unk. Chevy Camaro	CA/4WW251	1991 Eagle Talon	OH/DLA3730
1968 Ford Mustang	CA/WSS386	1990 Ford Bronco	NY/CFX1143
1968 Ford Mustang	MT/3B43644	1967 Chevy Camaro	UT/021VBN
Unk. Acura Integra	CA/5AFT065	2002 Dodge Ram	CA/6Z64544
1995 Ford Mustang	CO/446HTB	1972 Chevy Pickup	MI/9660MN